

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application or previous response to office action:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A method for increasing the safety of operation of an electrical component, comprising the steps of:

- generating a control signal by a microcontroller to actuate a load,
- amplifying the control signal;
- detecting actively a change in the switching state of a relevant load, and
- while the microcontroller is in a sleep mode detecting a disturbance of said

control signal by detecting a change in the amplified control signal through a diagnose reading port of said microcontroller, wherein said disturbance of the control signal is amplified such that an unwanted activation of said load is caused and wherein the diagnose reading port is a wake-up interrupt input or a non-maskable interrupt input of said microcontroller.

2. **(Cancelled)**

3. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to Claim 1, wherein the wake-up interrupt input of said microcontroller is a non-maskable interrupt input.

4. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to Claim 1, wherein turning on and off of a load is performed by a vehicle electrical system control unit, wherein a central locking motor is actuated as the load.

5. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to Claim 1, wherein diagnostic means are used to determine whether a fault state can be eliminated by the microcontroller, wherein remedial action being initiated by a system control unit if the microcontroller fails.

6. **(Currently Amended)** A device for increasing the safety of operation of an electrical component in a circuit, comprising

a microcontroller;

an amplifier having an input coupled to an output port of said microcontroller;

a load coupled to an output of said amplifier, wherein the amplifier is operable to amplify a disturbance of a control signal applied to said input such that an output signal of said amplifier activates said load; and

means for actively detecting a change of an output signal generated by said amplifier, wherein said means for actively detecting a change are coupled with an interrupt input of said microcontroller.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Cancelled)

9. **(Previously Presented)** The device according to Claim 6, wherein the means for actively detecting a change comprise a resistor network coupled between the output of the amplifier and a ground potential.

10. (Cancelled)

11. **(Currently Amended)** A device for increasing the safety of operation of an electrical component, in particular of electrical components in a vehicle, comprising:

- a microcontroller for actuating a load via an amplifier, wherein the amplifier is operable to amplify a disturbance of a control signal applied to an amplifier input such that an output signal of said amplifier activates said load

- means for detecting actively a change in the switching state of ~~a relevant~~ said load, and

- wherein the microcontroller is operable to be put in a sleep mode and while in sleep mode detects a disturbance of said control signal which causes a change in the amplified control signal through a wake-up interrupt input of said microcontroller.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 11, wherein the wake-up interrupt input of said microcontroller is a non-maskable interrupt input.

14. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 11, further comprising a vehicle electrical system control unit for turning on and off of a load, and a central locking motor being actuated as the load.

15. (Previously Presented) The device according to Claim 11, comprising a system control unit coupled with said means for performing diagnostic to determine whether a fault state can be eliminated by the microcontroller, wherein the system control unit is operable to initiate remedial action if the microcontroller fails.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein to eliminate a fault state upon detection of a disturbance, the microcontroller de-activates the load.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 16, wherein upon detection of a disturbance, the microcontroller is switched from a sleep mode into an active mode and resets said control signal.